

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SNM-02 M-03 A-01 SS-07 BAL-03 PER-05

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R 251336 Z JUN 73

FM AMEMBASSY QUITO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7832

BNDD HQS WASHDC

US CUSTOMS WASHDC

CIA WASHDC

INFO AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 3300

BNDD WASHINGTON FOR IA

CUSTOMS WASHDC FOR OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

BUENOS AIRES FOR BNDD

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, EC

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR ONE ADDITIONAL SPECIAL AGENT FOR
NARCOTICS PROGRAM IN ECUADOR

THIS IS A NARCOTICS ACTION COMMITTEE MESSAGE

1. THE USG NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT EFFORT IN ECUADOR
CURRENTLY CONSISTS OF TWO BNDD SPECIAL AGENTS AND ONE
CUSTOMS SPECIAL AGENT ALL LOCATED IN QUITO.

2. WITH THE DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION (DEA)
SCHEDULED TO BEGIN OPERATIONS JULY 1, 1973, WE ARE
REQUESTING THAT A FOURTH SPECIAL AGENT WITH A GOOD CUSTOMS
BACKGROUND BE ASSIGNED TO ECUADOR (PROBABLY FOR DUTY IN
GUAYAQUIL) FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

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(A) AS THE NAC HAS OBSERVED, ECUADOR IS AN IMPORTANT SOURCE AND TRANSIT COUNTRY FOR NARCOTICS. THERE ARE MANY CLANDESTINE LABORATORIES IN ECUADOR AND THERE IS A CONSIDERABLE MOVEMENT OF DRUGS ACROSS ITS ALMOST UNGUARDED BORDERS AND THROUGH ITS SEVERAL AIRPORTS (WHICH DO NOT HAVE SEPARATE TRANSIT PASSENGER HOLDING AREAS), AND SEAPORTS.

(B) BNDD REPORTS THAT GUAYAQUIL IS A HAVEN FOR AT LEAST SIX IDENTIFIED CLASS I VIOLATORS AND THAT MANY CLANDESTINE LABORATORIES ARE LOCATED IN THAT AREA.

(C) THE ECUADOREAN POLICE ARE PRESENTLY INCAPABLE OF CONTROLLING THE SITUATION ALTHOUGH THEY ARE EAGER TO COOPERATE WITH US. WHILE WE ARE MAKING GREAT EFFORTS TO IMPROVE POLICE CAPABILITY, WE DO NOT EXPECT THAT THE POLICE WILL BE ABLE TO HANDLE THE SITUATION BY THEMSELVES FOR SOME TIME. THIS IS BECAUSE THEY HAVE HAD TO START FROM SCRATCH.

(D) THE POLICE DO NOT ALWAYS RECEIVE SUFFICIENT COOPERATION FROM THE MILITARY AUTHORITIES WHICH GREATLY AGGRAVATES THEIR DIFFICULTIES.

3. ECUADOR IS AN IMPORTANT COUNTRY FROM THE DRUG ENFORCEMENT POINT OF VIEW, BUT ITS ENFORCEMENT CAPABILITIES ARE NOT GREAT ALTHOUGH IMPROVING. THEREFORE ANOTHER AGENT WOULD BE MOST HELPFUL IN ACHIEVING IMMEDIATE U. S. ENFORCEMENT OBJECTIVES (BECAUSE OF THE SITUATION PREVAILING HERE THE U. S. AGENTS ARE FORCED TO TAKE MORE ENFORCEMENT ACTION UPON THEMSELVES SUCH AS HANDLING AND DEVELOPING INFORMERS, CONDUCTING CLANDESTINE INVESTIGATIONS, ETC., THAN WOULD OTHERWISE BE THE CASE). FURTHERMORE ANOTHER AGENT WITH A CUSTOMS BACKGROUND WOULD GREATLY ASSIST OUR EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE ABILITIES OF THE INEXPERIENCED BUT WILLING LOCAL AUTHORITIES SINCE THEY MUST RELY ON THE U. S. RESIDENT AGENTS FOR MOST PRACTICAL GUIDANCE IN CASE WORK. THE ADDITIONAL AGENT WOULD ALSO ENABLE US TO GIVE BETTER COVERAGE TO GUAYAQUIL AND WOULD GIVE US A BETTER BALANCE OF EXPERTISE IN THE AREAS OF NARCOTICS- SMUGGLING OPERATIONS, INVESTIGATIONS, AND HANDLING OF INFORMERS.

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